Name and brief description of your initiative:
Biomedical Informatics Research Network (BIRN)
A shared biomedical IT infrastructure to hasten the derivation of new understanding and treatment of disease through the use of distributed knowledge. Drawing upon the expertise and technologies available at numerous institutions, the Biomedical Informatics Research Network (BIRN) is building an infrastructure of networked high-performance computers, data integration standards, and other emerging technologies, to pave the way for medical researchers to transform the treatment of disease.

Launched in 2001 as an initiative of the National Institutes of Health's National Center for Research Resources (NCRR), the BIRN is prototyping a collaborative environment for biomedical research and clinical information management.

A central component of the BIRN is its **Coordinating Center**, overseeing the networking, distributed storage, and software development needs of the three neuroimaging test beds:

The **Function BIRN Test Bed** is employing functional neuroimaging to explore the underlying causes of schizophrenia and to subsequently assess the impact of new treatments on functional brain abnormalities.

The **Brain Morphometry Test Bed** is focused on pooling acquired data across neuroimaging sites to investigate if specific anatomical differences are diagnostic of specific memory dysfunctions, such as depression, mild Alzheimer's disease, and mild cognitive impairment.

Collaborators in the **Mouse BIRN Test Bed** are utilizing multi-modal and multi-scale imaging data from mouse models of neurological disorders to better understand schizophrenia, Parkinson disease, multiple sclerosis, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and brain cancer.

More information can be found at http://www.nbirn.net.